

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 MCT-01 SP-02 PRS-01 INR-07 NSC-05
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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2104

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 12501

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, ET, US
SUBJ: WITHDRAWAL OF PEACE CORPS

REF: STATE 309213

1. BIGELOW IS PROCEEDING TODAY TO BEGIN CARRYING OUT INSTRUCTIONS STATE 306300 AND STATE 309542. ASPECT NOT DEALT WITH IN ANY OF RECENT MESSAGES IS PRESS GUIDANCE. IT MAY BE A FEW DAYS BEFORE WORD GETS AROUND, BUT WE SHOULD ANTICIPATE THAT FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS WILL PICK IT UP QUICKLY ENOUGH. I WOULD THEREFORE LIKE TO HAVE AGREED-UPON PRESS LINE ASAP, SINCE GUIDANCE NOW AVAILABLE (PARA 4 STATE 257274) IS NO LONGER TOTALLY APPLICABLE. PRESUMABLY WE COULD DRAW FROM PARA 3 OF STATE 309542 TO INCLUDE CONFIRMATION THAT PCVS ARE BEING PHASED OUT, THAT DECISION NOT TO RECRUIT MORE WAS TAKEN LAST JULY WHEN PC/W BECAME CONCERNED THAT PRESENT CONDITIONS IN ETHIOPIA WERE AND ARE SUCH THAT IT WAS BECOMING DIFFICULT TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PCVS TO PERFORM MEANINGFUL AND SATISFYING TASKS CONDUCIVE TO EFFECTIVE CULTURAL EXCHANGE (THIS FROM STATE 257274), BUT THAT PC HOPES SITUATION WILL BE TEMPORARY AND WIL BE PLEASED SEND PCVS BACK WHEN CONDITIONS PERMIT AND IF EPMG SO DESIRES.

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2. SUCH STATEMENT BY ELIMINATING ANY REFERENCE TO SAFETY FACTORS AND BY BEING OTHERWISE NON-SPECIFIC, BEGS QUESTION OF WHAT OUR DECISION IS REALLY ALL ABOUT AND WHAT IT MAY SIGNIFY FOR US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS. DEC/PC MAY THEREFORE WISH CONSIDER DESIRABILITY OF INCLUDING SOME REFERENCE TO SECURITY.

3. NECESSITY OF HAVING SOME PRESS GUIDANCE AVAILABLE
UNFORTUNATELY RAISES ONCE AGAIN IN MY MIND WISDOM OF
SAYING SOMETHING TO MOFA. IF WORD SEEPS THROUGH EPMG
BUREAUCRACY AND IS TRANSLATED INTO OFFICIAL QUESTIONS
(A PROCESS THAT COULD TAKE SOME TIME), THESE
WILL MOST LIKELY COME FROM MOFA. IN LINE WITH DEPT'S
INSTRUCTIONS IN STATE 309213, WE CAN AND WILL HANDLE THEM.
BUT MOFA WILL FIND IT MORE THAN PASSING STRANGE
IF THEY LEARN OF OUR DECISION THROUGH FOREIGN PRESS
WITHOUT ANY FOREKNOWLEDGE.

4. I WOULD THEREFORE APPRECIATE IT IF DEPT WOULD
HAVE ANOTHER LOOK AT THIS ASPECT AND IN ANY CASE
PROVIDE US WITH AGREED-UPON PRESS GUIDANCE SOONEST.
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